



Senses and Society

THEMATIC GROUP NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 27. DIGITAL BODIES



Choreographic Camouflage Liam Young and Jacob Jonas, 2024.

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Editorial Note

Welcome back to the TGo7 Senses and Society Newsletter. I would also like to extend a warm welcome to all the new members who have joined our group in recent months.

The energy of the ISA Forum in July is already palpable. Many of us will have the opportunity to present our work, while others will play a crucial role in fostering discussions and exchanges. In any case, it is with great enthusiasm that we look forward to welcoming you all to Rabat. For those unable to attend the conference, I will provide a detailed summary of key discussions and developments in a future issue of the newsletter—most likely in Issue 29, scheduled for September 2025.

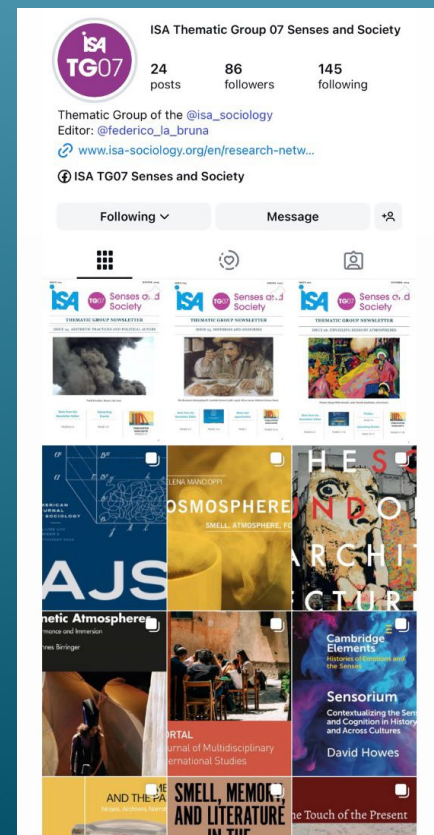
I also take this opportunity to recommend the ninth issue (in English) of the newsletter "[Secchiare](#)" which explores topics such as ravers, Sinofuturism, discovering parties on WeChat, and Beijing's no-drugs policy. Secchiare is part of the [International Night Studies Network](#) and stands as the first Italian newsletter dedicated to nocturnal culture. Through in-depth thematic editions, Enrico Petrilli, Riccardo Ramello, and Giorgia Castellano aim to restore complexity to night-time phenomena while bridging the gap between media, scholars, policymakers, enthusiasts, and the simply curious.

A quick reminder: since autumn 2023, the official TGo7 [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages have been active. Follow us to stay informed about TGo7 activities.

I hope you enjoy this issue.



Senses & Society



In this issue

This issue of our newsletter once again centres on the Forum of Sociology, which will take place in Rabat from 6 to 11 July 2025. While we await the final programme, this edition offers guidance on planning your trip and highlights [registration deadlines \(March 22\)](#) to keep in mind. It also provides important updates on the new registration procedures for our research group, which now require active membership in the ISA. If your [membership](#) has expired, it must be renewed before you can rejoin our group or any other thematic section.

Beyond these updates, the News and Opportunities section features a call for proposal for our next research group's [online event](#) – an excellent opportunity to present your work to an expert audience. This initiative marks a significant step forward for our thematic group, reinforcing our commitment to growth and engagement.

As always, this issue includes the Profiles section, a recurring feature that introduces members of our group and their research interests, strengthening the sense of community we have fostered since the group's inception. Thus, [I kindly encourage our new members, early career scholars, and anyone interested to submit a brief description of their academic path, current work, and interests](#) (by sending an email to tg07.sensesandsociety@gmail.com).

As usual, the newsletter will conclude with a list of exciting events and publication highlights. In this number, you can find news on the "[Uncommon Senses V](#)" conference, the conference "[Sensing the Materiality of the Early Modern Islamic World](#)", and the Second Festival of Architecture and Listening: [Espacios Resonantes](#).

Digital Bodies

Deborah Lupton's (2017) idea of *digital bodies* opens a critical perspective in the context of sensory studies, on how we perceive and interact with the digital, questioning how sensory experiences develop in virtual spaces and the implications of this transformation for the relationship between corporeality and technology. While the body has traditionally been understood as a situated and tangible entity, the increasing diffusion of digital technologies redefines its experience, leading us to explore forms of perception that extend beyond the boundaries of the physical and the material.

Rather than focusing on the dichotomy between the digital and the non-digital, for example, we could shift our attention to the peculiarities of making sense of the digital world beyond the conceptual frameworks we have imposed so far. The reproduction of the senses in digital environments, particularly through visual haptics, challenges traditional sensory hierarchies

and calls for a reconceptualization of perception itself. Recognizing the difference between a digital image and a real image can result as an outdated way of thinking about digitality. Instead, moving through a digital environment requires what we might call *digital proprioception* — an embodied awareness of one's presence and interaction in virtual space. This perspective aligns with neomaterialist approaches, such as those proposed by Katherine Hayles (1999) and Karen Barad (2007), which emphasize the entanglement of materiality and digital mediation. These scholars argue that digital bodies are not separate from material bodies but co-constituted through processes of interaction, sensation, and meaning-making. By adopting this lens, we can better understand how digital technologies do not merely simulate sensory experience but actively participate in shaping new forms of corporeality and perception.

This issue of the TGO7 Senses and Society newsletter aims to explore these transformations, posing fundamental questions about the relationship between digital and corporeality: how do we perceive what is digital? What sensory dynamics emerge in virtual spaces? And how are sensory experiences reconfigured in the interaction between digital and material? Through the analysis of these questions, the sociology of the senses opens up new research trajectories, interrogating the relationship between technology, perception, and corporeality in an era of increasing hybridization between the physical and the virtual.

References:

- Barad, K. (2007). Meeting the universe halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning. duke university Press.
- Hayles, N. K. (1999). The illusion of autonomy and the fact of recursivity: Virtual ecologies, entertainment, and Infinite Jest. *New Literary History*, 30(3), 675-697.
- Lupton, D. (2017). Digital bodies. In *Routledge handbook of physical cultural studies* (pp. 200-208). Routledge.

If you miss the Newsletter issue #26 on "Unveiling Sensory Atmospheres": don't worry! You can investigate what sensory atmospheres are and how they can be a tool for understanding society through our senses [here](#).

Don't forget there are some active links (clickable URLs) in this Newsletter, especially useful for the 'Publication Highlights' section ([page 13](#)).

Please feel free to email me (tg07.sensesandsociety@gmail.com) with any relevant news, publications, or calls for papers that fellow Group members could benefit from.

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V ISA Forum of Sociology • Rabat, Morocco

Important deadlines

Registration for the 5th ISA Forum is open now! (<https://isaconf.confex.com/isaconf/forum2025/registration/index.cgi?>) **Registration deadline is March 22!**

The 5th ISA Forum of Sociology will be an on-site event only, and we look forward to welcoming you onsite in Morocco!

Confex sent notification letters to Authors and co-authors of accepted abstracts and Authors of rejected abstracts on December 5, 2024.

To be included in the program, all participants (including presenters, chairs, discussants, etc.) **must complete their registration by paying full registration fees no later than March 22, 2025**. If not registered, their names will not appear in the Program Book and Abstracts Book.

Registration fees vary depending on your membership status with the International Sociological Association, your country of residence, and your membership category (Regular, Student, or Life Member).

Non-member students are eligible for a special registration fee. To apply for this status, you must submit your application through your ISA account attaching your proving documentation.

Flights

To plan your trip to Rabat, you may consider any of the following airports:

[Rabat–Salé Airport](#) (RBA): This airport is the closest to the city, located approximately 9 km from its center.

[Casablanca Mohammed V International Airport](#) (CMN): This airport is about 99 km from Rabat and offers a wide range of flight options.

[Tangier Ibn Battouta Airport](#) (TNG): It is approximately 240 km from Rabat, but at the latest, it can be reached via High-Speed Train in 1 hour 20 min.

Accommodation

The ISA has decided not to offer a hotel reservation system for the 5th ISA Forum of Sociology in Rabat.

When looking for accommodation, you may also consider the following nearby cities:

Salé: Neighboring to Rabat, Salé is located across the Bouregreg River, making it easily accessible by train (20 min) and urban taxi (10 min).

Skhirat: Approximately 28 km southwest of Rabat, a city located along the coastline. It is reachable by interurban taxi (20 min) and train (25 min).

Kénitra: Approximately 49 Km north of Rabat, this city is reachable by train (35 min) and interurban taxi (40 min).

Casablanca: Located about 87 kilometers southwest of Rabat, Casablanca is accessible via an interurban taxi (1 hour) and train (50 min).

News and Opportunities

Call for proposals for an online international event (late 2025/early 2026)

The official ISA Forums and Congresses occur in sequence every two years, but at TGo7 we would like to encourage the sharing of our sensory scholarship around a particular theme or area in between these major international events. [If you have an idea for an online meeting](#) which deals with work on the senses, especially an under-explored or under-represented topic area or regional area, please go ahead and submit a paragraph in the first instance to the President (paterson@pitt.edu) and we can work together to make it happen. ISA is a truly global organization, so proposals that deal with sensory scholarship outside the usual North America/Europe areas will be particularly welcome.

To become a member of TGo7

You're interested in sensory scholarship. You read this Newsletter. So why not become a member of our thematic group?

What are the benefits? You are already on a mailing list and receive a triannual Newsletter. But becoming a member means you get to shape an agenda in sensory scholarship, propose international events, and get to pitch ideas for conference sessions at ISA. We need your ideas and your energy. The bigger we become as a TG, the more we can do, and we can then help younger scholars attend future conferences and events. With membership of TGO7 you can also join our Board and help steer our activities and priorities.

Interested in joining?

It is no longer possible to become a member of TGO7 without paying ISA registration fees. Being part of a RC/WG/TG now is possible only for ISA members. Below, you can find how to become a member of TGO7 with a minimal contribution.

- 1) Log in at <https://members.isa-sociology.org/login>.
- 2) If you do not have an ISA membership account, you need to register (free) here: <https://members.isa-sociology.org/register>. Enter your biographical information.
- 3) If you do not have an ISA membership, you need become a member by following the instruction at: <https://members.isa-sociology.org/my-affiliations>. Within the same process you will be able to join also the RC/WG/TG you are interested in.
- 4) In case you already have an ISA membership, on the same page (<https://members.isa-sociology.org/my-affiliations>), will appear the button for 'Affiliate to RC/WG/TG'.
- 5) This will bring up invoicing details for 'Update affiliation'. Scroll down for the list of research councils, with TGO7 towards the bottom. Check that box.
- 6) You can then enter payment data (credit card). The standard option is \$20 for 4 years, but if you need a discount, e.g. because of student status, and that option does not come up on the form, do contact the ISA team (isa@isa-sociology.org)

Profiles

Dilek Üstünelan, New Member

Dilek Üstünelan is a PhD candidate in the [Department of Sociology](#) of [Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University](#), in İstanbul, Turkey. Üstünelan is researching middle-class Syrian women's homemaking processes, based on the sensory-spatial experiences both in the domestic and urban environments. Üstünelan employed sensory methodologies in my research: Sensory ethnography in participants' living spaces and urban environments, sensory walks along



routes chosen based on participants' emotional connections to the city and in-depth interviews that explored participants' sensory experiences in specific environments.

Üstünelan methodological preferences and explorations in sociological research are also influenced by dance practice. Üstünelan has been involved in somatic dance practices for over ten years, which has deepened an understanding of the role of sensing and embodiment in socio-cultural interactions.

Ramazan Aras, New Member

Ramazan Aras is professor of Anthropology and Sociology at the [Department of Sociology](#) at [Ibn Haldun University](#) in Istanbul. He is also the Founding Director of [Center for Oral History and Social Memory Studies](#) at Ibn Haldun. Previously, he worked at the Departments of Anthropology at both [Western University](#) (Canada) and [Mardin Artuklu University](#) (Turkey). He is the author of [The Formation of Kurdishness in Turkey: Political Violence, Fear and Pain](#) (Routledge, 2013), [Crossing Borders: Socio-cultural Anthropology and Interdisciplinary Approaches in Turkey](#) (Ed., Çizgi Kitabevi, 2014, in Turkish), [Landmine and Smuggler: The Making and Unmaking Practices of Turkish-Syrian Border](#) (Çizgi Kitabevi, 2015, in Turkish), [The Wall: The Making and Unmaking of Turkish Syrian Border](#) (Palgrave, 2020), [Anthropology and Sociology of Emotions: Theoretical and Ethnographic Perspectives from Turkey and Beyond](#) (Ed., Ibn Haldun University Press, 2024) and [Palestine and the Future of Global Affairs: Power, Language and Colonialism](#) (Eds, with Ahmet Y. Ozdemir, Ibn Haldun University Press, 2025). His main research areas are social theory, anthropology of state, anthropology of emotions, senses, memory, social trauma, body, place, borders and borderlands, migration, oral history, sociology and anthropology of secularism and Islam.



Upcoming Events

Espacios Resonantes: II Festival of Architecture and Listening • 15/03/25 - 27/04/25 • Santiago, Chile

The Second Festival of Architecture and Listening will take place across various locations in Santiago de Chile from 15 March to 27 April. This cultural event features performances and



discussions that explore the acoustic dimensions of architecture. Presenting this festival in an issue dedicated to digital bodies invites us to reflect on how our bodies are also digital entities, deeply embedded within urban architectures. It offers new perspectives on the role of sound in urban life and the frequencies at which our bodies resonate. The interplay between digital embodiment and the sonic landscapes of the city provides a critical space for rethinking sensory perception, corporeality, and the urban experience. Below a few word on the event by the organisers.

"Espacios Resonantes (Resonant Spaces Project) is an artistic research and a series of artworks that focuses on the aesthetic, political, social and acoustic dimension of aural architecture as a means to build alternative and subjective narratives, developing from this starting point experimental proposals around music, video, performance, installation, urban intervention, virtual reality and spatial sound design. The project its developed by an interdisciplinary team composed by Chilean artists Sofía Balbontín (PhD(c), architect and sound artist) and Mathias Klenner (PhD(c), architect and sound artist). In 2022, the project produced the 1st version of the Architecture and Listening Festival: Espacios Resonantes, an instance where a multidisciplinary community of international artists, researchers, architects and musicians converge to transform and speculate around the Copas de Agua from Santiago de Chile. This project has been funded by the Ministerio de las Culturas, las Artes y el Patrimonio, and the Research Unit of Universidad de las Américas. With the support of the Núcleo de Lenguaje y Creación and the Facultad de Arquitectura, Diseño y Construcción UDLA."

Sensory Histories of Water: International Conference • 02/04/25 - 04/04/25 • Museu Marítim de Barcelona, Spain

The Call for Proposals to [Sensory Histories of Water](#) is now closed. Soon registration to the international conference held by the Marítim de Barcelona will be open. Below the introduction to the event by the organisers.

"Water as an elemental force has shaped human experience across millennia. Its physical properties and omnipresence in daily life have made it an object of profound sensory engagement, influencing cultures, environments, and social practices. In this way, humankind has interacted with water both in its natural form – e.g. seas, lakes, rivers, springs, rain, dew, or fog – and through its transformations, such as wells, drainage and irrigation systems, water mills, fountains, baths, and steam. The multifacetedness of water is perfectly portrayed in Tvedt's nine-volume History of Water series, capturing the complex relationship between water and society (Tvedt, 2006-2016). Additionally, other studies have focused on various historical encounters of humankind with water from technological (Menga 2018, Ipšić and Lazarević 2019), geopolitical (Horden and Purcell 2000, Solomon 2010, Wagner 2013), environmental (Dobrin 2021, Borroni 2024), literary (Mentz 2009, Mentz and Helms 2024), philosophical (Illich 1986), and ethnographic perspectives (Classen 2017). Furthermore, a whole sub-discipline that foregrounds human relationship with water,



i.e. blue humanities, illustrates the potential of research on water cultures (cf. Mentz 2023). Building on the existing body of knowledge, this conference seeks to explore sensory experiences of water across the globe, from antiquity to modernity, through various approaches and within a transdisciplinary context. Within the framework of sensory history, we aim to explore how the presence of water and interaction with it has affected and shaped human communities, spaces, knowledge, and identities."

Democratization of the Senses – Senses of Democracy: Emancipation as Experience of Equality in Hierarchical Otherwise Sensorial Spaces • 04/04/25 - 06/04/25 • University of Marburg, Germany

The University of Marburg host the conference [Democratization of the Senses](#) that will focus on the analysis of the hegemonic use of the senses, particularly the visual sense. the conference aims to explore concepts as democratization of the senses and irritation of the visual sense. Below a few word on the event by the organisers.

"Based on our assumption that political emancipation hinges less on marginalized groups' lack of knowledge than on their lack of opportunity to gain diverse experiences (cf. Rancière 2016), the conference also aims to open an egalitarian space of speech and experience. Equality is understood in terms of "enabling the juxtaposition of two voices" (Ranciere 2008, 11) and as the "fact of mutual understanding" (ibid., 14). The conference will provide hierarchically-different sensorial spaces and situations, thus creating, as we hope, a condition for political emancipation. This arrangement enables the sensorial perception in bodily interiors and interstices as a political public where sensorial inequality is collectively negotiated."

Uncommon Senses V: "Sensing the Social, the Environment, and Across the Arts and Sciences" • 07/05/25 - 11/05/25 • In person/online - Concordia University, Montreal

The Call for Proposals for the next conference in the Uncommon senses series is now closed. The conference '[Uncommon Senses V: Sensing the Social, the Environment, and Across the Arts and Sciences](#)', will run from 7 to 11 May 2025, at Concordia University, Montreal, both in-person and on-line. Visit the [website](#) to register. Below a few word on the event by the organisers.

"We are pleased to announce the fifth conference in the biennial Uncommon Senses conference series, hosted by the Centre for Sensory Studies at Concordia University, Montreal. The extremely high response to our Call for Proposals is a testimony to the extraordinary momentum of the "sensorial revolution" in the arts, humanities and social sciences – and beyond (e.g., the more-than-human). The conference program will feature 4 keynote addresses, and over 200 individual papers arranged in 90-minute sessions as well as 22 panels, 8 roundtables and 26 workshops likewise arranged in 90-minute sessions. There

will also be a Virtual Art Gallery composed of 12 artworks and a Multisensory Art Gallery consisting of 24 installations and/or performances, complemented by 2 receptions – an ‘Insidious Banquet’ on the opening night (to purify your senses) and a ‘Gala Banquet’ on the Friday evening (to satisfy your senses).

With 124 concurrent 90-minute sessions distributed over the four days of the conference, this event is shaping up to be an 8-ring circus. A preliminary version of the conference program is accessible [here](#) and an overview of the schedule (Timetabling) is accessible [here](#). Provision has been made for a limited number of auditor’s tickets, for a modest fee.

We look forward to welcoming you to Montreal this coming May 2025, either in-person or on-line via the multimodal Grenadine platform. If you have any questions please contact senses@concordia.ca"

Sensing the Materiality of the Early Modern Islamic World • 22/05/25 - 23/05/25 • Utrecht University, Netherlands

The Call for Proposals for [Sensing the Materiality of the Early Modern Islamic World](#) is now closed. The University of Marburg host a conference that focus on the role of sensoriality in the early modern Islamic World. Below the introduction to the event by the organisers.

"Historians of Islamic art have long been attentive to the sensory properties of material culture and architecture in the early modern period. The longstanding interest in perception coupled with more recent efforts to understand it as a multi-sensorial phenomenon has also nurtured breakthroughs in the study of aesthetics and major epistemological reorientations within the field. Historians and anthropologists of religion have also taken a vivid interest in the materiality and sensoriality of religious devotion in recent years, significantly widening the conceptual breadth of academic discussions on these topics. However, the role of material culture and architecture in shaping sensory and affective experience in the early modern Islamic world invites further research. This conference, convened by the SENSIS research project at Utrecht University, seeks to bring together a multidisciplinary group of scholars interested in addressing this challenge. How did material culture and architecture shape early modern Islamic sensescapes and the affective practices associated with them? How did the material and sensory properties of objects and architecture modulate these sensescapes? How did specific objects or built environments stimulate affective engagement and what kind? How did material and visual culture mediate perception in the early modern Islamic world? How did the sensory practices in separate political and cultural entities

engage or distinguish themselves from one another? How did objects arouse distinct sensory experiences as they circulated and became recontextualized in the early modern period? How did people's sensory experiences evolve as their urban environments changed in this era? By shaping experience on a somatic level, objects and architecture hold the potential to inform us about embodied social and cultural practices of the past in a different way than textual sources. By directly impacting the body's sensory faculties, they facilitate or discourage certain emotional responses and forms of behavior. Sensations and emotions are often closely linked; thus, the careful calibration of the senses is an effective means of evoking affective reactions. Furthermore, the sensory and affective practices stimulated and mediated by material culture and architecture can collapse temporal and spatial distance by immersing subjects in the moment of experience. In other words, they can offer insights that complicate or contrast with scholars' reconstructions of lived experience based solely on discursive practices."

Publication Highlights

Lev Manovich. Computer vision, human senses, and language of art. AI & Society, 2020.

Lev Manovich (2020) explores how computer vision and the visual languages of digital art are redefining sensory interactions with the digital world, arguing that human perception must be understood in relation to algorithms and artificial vision technologies. In this framework, perception is increasingly mediated by information rather than direct sensory experience, shifting from digital sensors to descriptors of sensations. Yet, a critical question emerges: what is vision? Is it simply a tool for categorisation, or rather a material and affective process of co-construction between the individual and their environment? Below, I provide the abstract of the article.



"In this article, I argue that the use of numerical representation and data analysis methods offers a new language for describing cultural artifacts, experiences and dynamics. The human languages such as English or Russian that developed rather recently in human evolution are not good at capturing analog properties of human sensorial and cultural experiences. These limitations become particularly worrying if we want to compare thousands, millions or billions of artifacts—i.e. to study contemporary media and cultures at their new twenty-first century scale. When we instead use numerical measurements of image properties standard in Computer Vision, we can better capture details of a single artifact as well as visual differences between a number of artifacts—even if they are very small. The examples of visual dimensions that numbers can capture better than languages include color, shape, texture, contours, composition, and visual characteristics of represented faces, bodies and objects. The methods of finding structures and relationships in large numerical datasets developed in statistics and machine learning allow us to extend this analysis to very big datasets of cultural objects. Equally importantly, numerical image features used in Computer Vision also give us a new language to represent gradual and continuous temporal changes—something which natural languages are also bad at. This applies to both single artworks such as a film or a dance piece (describing movement and rhythm) and also to changes in visual characteristics in millions of artifacts over decades or centuries."

Sarah Maslen. Layers of sense: the sensory work of diagnostic sensemaking in digital health. Digital Health, 2017.



A perspective that enriches a purely informational view of the senses is that of Sarah Maslen (2017), who explores the theme of digital medical diagnosis, demonstrating how sensory processes are redefined within the sense-making practices of digital health, where perception unfolds through both information and direct sensory experience. Below, I provide the abstract of the article.

"Sensory judgements have always been a part of medical practice and this sensory work is often entangled with technologies, from the stethoscope to digitised devices for advanced life support. This article investigates this sensory work and its entanglements with technological sensors in diagnostic practice. Based on semi-structured interviews, it presents a close analysis of practitioners' use of anaesthetic monitoring and telemedicine. It argues that senses and sensors are recursively combined in the moment

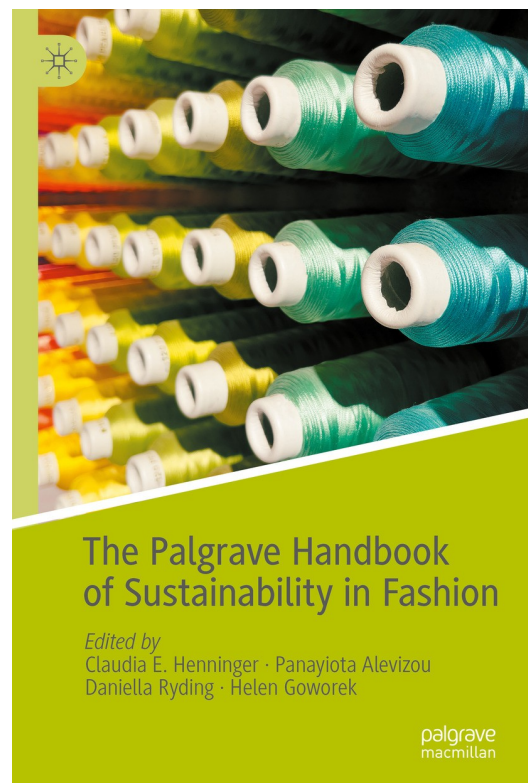
towards understanding. In this, digital technologies do not present self-evident data, but rather the practitioner must learn to sense the sensors to interpret health and illness. Sensory work (of both the senses and sensors) is not dispensable or entirely delegable because it is intimately entwined with sensemaking. The significance of sensory work to sensemaking reinforces the importance of its consideration in digital health sociotechnical assemblages."

Ruxandra Lupu and Margherita Tufarelli. The Virtual Life of Textile Innovations: Exploring Visual Haptics Potentials That Shape Multisensory User Experience. The Palgrave Handbook of Sustainability in Fashion, 2024.

Ruxandra Lupu and Margherita Tufarelli (2024) examine the role of touch and materiality in the digital realm, exploring the potential of haptic visuality in textile innovations. They suggest that touch can be visually evoked and that multisensory experiences take on complex forms even in virtual environments. In this process, sensory information is not only mediated through digital interfaces but also perceived through the senses themselves, underscoring the deeply interconnected nature of sensory perception in digital interactions. Below, I provide the abstract of the article.

"The fashion industry currently needs to accelerate its sustainable transition while also facing an intense digitisation process involving both design and production. Despite the enthusiasm surrounding the opportunities offered by digitisation and the development of recycled, bio-based and low-waste

materials, market uptake of textile innovations remains limited. This chapter explores the potential of haptic visuality—the sensation of touching things just by looking at them—to create meaningful interactions for the online experience of textile innovations, to facilitate multisensory experience and thus encouraging better understanding and engagement with these new materials. This project uses an action-research framework to investigate the exploitation of visual haptics strategies for textile innovations through two phases: An experimental fabric hand-testing stage that builds on theories of cinematic haptics and integrates a micro-camera to explore the tactile experiences of twelve designers while manipulating four textile innovations; and a workshop with selected designers that builds on



theories of semantic haptics to exploit the potential of integrating the audio-visual recordings resulting from the tests into an online user experience. Results show that haptic properties of textile innovations can be induced to an important extent using visual experience. However, the complexity of the human sensorium makes it impossible to create a universal taxonomy for haptic textile experiences that builds on cinematic haptics. Instead, creative processes building on semantic haptics, i.e. using visual haptics as a metaphor, can provide fruitful ways to design suggestive virtual experiences for the exploration of textile innovations."

Sharafat Hussain. Multisensory Digital Experiences: Integrating New Interactive Technologies With Human Senses. Handbook of Research on Future Opportunities for Technology Management Education, 2021.

Similarly, Sharafat Hussain (2021) explores the integration of interactive technologies with human senses, opening a discussion on how digital experiences can simultaneously engage multiple sensory dimensions. This raises a critical question: how can virtual environments replicate the ability of the senses to convey information about one another? What remains unresolved, however, is our capacity to perceive the digital in its full complexity. If the digitalisation of the senses transforms objects into virtual entities until they become perceptible again, does the phenomenological distinction between the real and the virtual dissolve, or does digitality retain a perceptible quality of its own? Below, I provide the abstract of the article.

"Whether we go to a restaurant or jogging, almost all the experiences in our daily lives consist of what we see, hear, smell, taste, and feel. Lately, especially in the COVID-19-affected world, many of these multisensory experiences have been transformed and capitalized through invents in technology. This chapter looks at the technological



advancements in the area of new interactive technologies and multisensory experiences. This chapter describes the basics of multisensory experiences, the relationship between the human senses and technologies. It discusses the concepts that help analyze and explain how the senses interact with each other. Further, this chapter highlights the difference between virtual reality, augmented reality, and mixed reality using the reality-virtuality continuum. In the end, this chapter underscores some ethical concerns, our responsibility towards it, and what the future of

those multisensory experiences may hold for us."

Amelia DeFalco and Luna Dolezal. (Eds.) Affective Technotouch. *The Senses and Society* 18(2), 2023.

The affective and corporeal dimensions of digital touch are central to the volume edited by Amelia DeFalco and Luna Dolezal (2023), which includes Mark Paterson's article *Social Robots and the Futures of Affective Touch*. This work examines the phenomenology of *affective technotouch*, exploring how digital interactions can elicit emotional and tactile responses despite the absence of direct physical contact. Understanding these dynamics may require a closer analysis of the unique affective responses that emerge in encounters with technology, offering insights into how such interactions shape new forms of sensory and emotional engagement. Below, I provide the abstract of the article.



"This Editors' Introduction defines the theme of 'affective technotouch' as referring to multidimensional embodied encounters with technologies which can trigger emotional and affective responses, while also being concerned with social, political, cultural and ethical dimensions of technological touch. With reference to neuroscience and developmental studies, we outline how touch is foundational in human experience. We then discuss contemporary technologies, such as haptic gadgets and care/companion robots, which illustrate the complexities of affective technotouch. Finally, we offer critical outlines of the six contributing articles to this Special Issue on Affective Technotouch."

Hot off the press

Giulio Galimberi and Nicole Miglio. Touching through distance: Cyborg affective touch during Covid-19 pandemic. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 2024.

Finally, the contribution by Giulio Galimberi and Nicole Miglio (2024), featured in this issue's Hot Off the Press section, explores the role of digital touch during the Covid-19 pandemic, demonstrating how technologically mediated touch has shaped affective and relational dynamics. Once again, the pandemic serves as a critical lens for examining the



transformations of contemporary society. The focus shifts away from distinctions between real and digital, human and non-human, towards the co-production of affective and sensory experience. Below, I provide the abstract of the article.

"The enforcement of social distancing measures and lockdowns across the globe to control the spread of Covid-19 has led to various forms of tactile deprivation. While social interactions became less accessible for some groups of people, this deprivation brought a re-emphasis of the importance of social touch. The label affective haptic devices (AHDs) has been used to address a plethora of digital media prompts assembled to help people to compensate for their lack of affective touch. By simulating the experience of touch through digital devices, we witness a potential re-negotiation of the human/non-human divide and a productive means to

challenge the boundaries of human skin. Our contribution – organized in the sections (i) Tactile deprivation; (ii) Replacing social touch; (iii) Towards a feminist understanding of extended touch – then aims to investigate the cyborg dimension of extended touch for raising further questions on the role of touch in defining the human being."